



PUBLIC NOTICE

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WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS BUREAU REQUESTS THAT COMMENTS IN HEARING AID COMPATIBILITY PROCEEDING ADDRESS EFFECTS OF NEW LEGISLATION

WT Docket No. 07-250

Comment Date: October 25, 2010

Reply Comment Date: November 22, 2010

On October 8, 2010, President Obama signed into law the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010, ensuring that individuals with disabilities have access to emerging Internet Protocol-based communication and video programming technologies in the 21st Century. Section 102 of the Act extends hearing aid compatibility requirements to customer premises equipment “used with advanced communications services that is designed to provide 2-way voice communications via a built-in speaker intended to be held to the ear in a manner functionally equivalent to a telephone.”¹ The Act preserves the exemption of mobile handsets from the general requirement that all telephones be hearing aid-compatible, while maintaining the Commission’s authority to revoke or limit such exemption if certain conditions are met.²

On August 5, 2010, the Commission released a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeking comment on proposed revisions to the rules governing hearing aid compatibility of mobile handsets.³ Among other things, the Commission proposed to extend its rules beyond the current scope of 47 C.F.R. § 20.19(a) to include customer equipment used to provide wireless voice communications over any type of network among members of the public or a substantial portion of the public. The Commission sought comment on whether considerations of technological feasibility or marketability prevent application of these requirements to such customer equipment.⁴

¹ S. 3304, 111th Cong. sec. 102 (as signed by President, Oct. 8, 2010); see also S. 3828, 111th Cong. (as signed by President, Oct. 8, 2010).

² *Id.*

³ See generally Amendment of the Commission’s Rules Governing Hearing Aid-Compatible Mobile Handsets, WT Docket No. 07-250, *Policy Statement and Second Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, FCC 10-145, paras. 73-101 (rel. Aug. 5, 2010) (“*Further Notice*”).

⁴ *Id.* at paras. 74-93.

We request that comments on the *Further Notice* address the effect of the new legislation, if any, on the proposed rules. Comments remain due on October 25, 2010, and reply comments are due on November 22, 2010.⁵

For further information, contact Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Zhaohui Yang at (202) 418-1476 or Zhaohui.Yang@fcc.gov.

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⁵ Amendment of the Commission's Rules Governing Hearing Aid-Compatible Mobile Handsets, 75 Fed. Reg. 54546 (Sept. 8, 2010).